

Message Text

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TAGS: ECOSOC, EGEN, XF

SUBJECT: 61ST ECOSOC: ITEM 19, EGYPTIAN RESOLUTION ON ASSISTANCE
TO PALESTINIANS

REF.: (A) STATE 188298, (B) GENEVA 6071, (C) GENEVA 6035

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1. BEGIN SUMMARY: THE RESOLUTION ON ASSISTANCE TO THE PALESTINIAN

PEOPLE, COMPLETE WITH LANGUAGE CALLING FOR UN AGENCIES' COOPERATION AND COORDINATION WITH "THE PLO, THE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE," WAS ADOPTED IN COMMITTEE BY VOTE OF 37-1(US)-11. THE US EXPLAINED ITS VOTE PER OUR INSTRUCTIONS. THE PRIOR DEBATE INCLUDED A CONTENTIONS STATEMENT BY THE ISRAELI OBSERVER, WITH REJOINDERS BY ARAB DELEGATIONS. END SUMMARY.

2. THE EGYPTIAN RESOLUTION ON ASSISTANCE TO THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE WAS INTRODUCED IN COMMITTEE ON JULY 29 BY PAKISTAN ON BEHALF OF THE G-77 PLUS BULGARIA AND GDR. IT WAS ADOPTED ON JULY 30 BY ROLE-CALL VOTE OF 37-1(US-11, WITH FIVE ABSENT. THE ABSTENTIONS WERE AUSTRALIA, AUSTRIA, BELGIUM, CANADA, DENMARK, FRANCE, FRG, ITALY, NORWAY, PORTUGAL, UK. THUS GREECE AND JAPAN WERE THE ONLY MEMBERS OF THE WESTERN (WEO) GROUP WHO VOTED "YES." BOLIVIA, ECUADOR, PERU, NIGERIA AND ZAMBIA, WERE THE ABSENTEES, BUT BOLIVIA, NIGERIA AND ZAMBIA LATER STATED IN COMMITTEE THEY WOULD HAVE VOTED FOR THE RESOLUTION.

3. THE US (AMB. MYERSON) EXPLAINED ITS VOTE AFTER THE VOTE, AS FOLLOWS:

QUOTE: THE UNITED STATES CAN SYMPATHIZE WITH THE BROAD PURPOSE OF THE RESOLUTION THAT HAS JUST BEEN ADOPTED BUT HAS VOTED AGAINST THE RESOLUTION BECAUSE THE INTRODUCTION OF AN EXTRANEIOUS POLITICAL ISSUE INEVITABLY DRAWS INTO QUESTION THE OBJECTIVE OF THE RESOLUTION AS A WHOLE. PARAGRAPH TWO OF THE RESOLUTION ASSERTS THAT "THE PALESTINE LIBERATION ORGANIZATION (IS) THE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE." THE UNITED STATES RECOGNIZES AND SUPPORTS EFFORTS TO MEET THE NEEDS OF THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE. THE U.S. IS A MAJOR CONTRIBUTOR TO UNRWA. BUT WE REJECT THE INTRUSION OF POLITICAL ISSUES OF THIS KIND INTO THE ACTIVITIES OF ECOSOC, AS WE REJECT EFFORTS TO POLITICIZE THE SPECIALIZED AGENCIES. THIS IS WHY MY DELEGATION HAS VOTED "NO." UNQUOTE

4. COLOMBIA, SPEAKING BEFORE THE U.S., EXPLAINED IT HAD VOTED FAVORABLY BECAUSE IT SUPPORTED ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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ASSISTANCE TO THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE, BUT WISHED TO MAKE CLEAR THAT IT DID NOT NECESSARILY SUPPORT THE POLITICAL ARGUMENTS ADVANCED BY VARIOUS DELEGATIONS IN SUPPORT OF THE RESOLUTION. (THUS COLOMBIA WAS THE ONLY LATIN AMERICAN COUNTRY, SOME OF WHOM FELT UNCOMFORTABLE WITH THIS RESOLUTION, TO EXPRESS THIS EVEN OBLIQUELY.) FRANCE IN ITS EXPLANATION CHIDED THOSE WHO SEEM MORE INTERESTED IN RECOGNITION OF THE PLO THAN IN MEETING THE NEEDS OF THE

PALESTINIAN PEOPLE. JAPAN SAID IT RECOGNIZED THE IMPORTANCE OF MEETING THOSE NEEDS, BUT CONSIDERED THAT ASSISTANCE SHOULD BE EXTENDED IN THE SAME MANNER AS TO OTHER LIBERATION MOVEMENTS AND IN CLOSE COOPERATION WITH THE GOVERNMENTS CONCERNED.

5. JUST PRIOR TO THE FORMAL INTRODUCTION OF THE RESOLUTION THE EGYPTIAN DELEGATION TOLD US, FURTHER TO OUR EARLIER CONVERSATION (REFTEL B), THAT THEY HAD TAKEN SOUNDINGS BUT THAT THE SUBSTITUTION OF "INTERESTED PARTIES" FOR THE EXISTING LANGUAGE ON THE PLO WAS UNACCEPTABLE TO ARAB DELEGATIONS AND THE PLO OBSERVER.

6. THE FIRST SPEAKER IN DEBATE FOLLOWING PAKISTAN'S CONTENTIOUS INTRODUCTION OF THE RESOLUTION ON JULY 29 WAS THE ISRAELI OBSERVER (HARAN). THE LATTER EXPRESSED STRONG RESERVATIONS; STATED HE HAD NO OBJECTION TO IMPROVING THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS OF THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE, CLAIMING ISRAEL HAD DONE MORE THAN ANYONE ELSE, IN CONTRAST TO THE IMMENSELY WEALTHY COUNTRIES OF THE AREA; HOWEVER, HE SAID THE PLO WAS A GANG BENT ON DESTROYING ISRAEL, CITING NUMEROUS EXAMPLES OF ATROCITIES. JORDAN ANSWERED, INTER ALIA DISPUTING ISRAEL'S CLAIMS ABOUT ECONOMIC CONDITIONS ON THE WEST BANK; THE PLO OBSERVER JOINED IN; AND OTHERS SPEAKING IN SUPPORT OF THE RESOLUTION WERE THE USSR, TUNIA AND CHINA. EGYPT, PRIOR TO THE VOTE ON JULY 30, SAID THE ISRAELI STATEMENT WAS FURTHER EVIDENCE OF THE ZIONIST AIM OF DISRUPTING ASSISTANCE TO THE PALESTINIANS AND, IN SUPPORTING THE DRAFT RESOLUTION, REFERRED TO THE GA RESOLUTION RECOGNIZING THE PLO AS THE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE.

7. AFTER THE VOTE AND THE EXPLANATIONS OF VOTE, THE PLO OBSERVER IN A BRIEF, LOW-KEY STATEMENT EXPRESSED THANKS, LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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STATED THE RESOLUTION WAS A STEP TOWARD RECTIFYING THE WRONGS TO THE PALESTINIANS COMMITTED BY RACIST ZIONISM, AND SAID HE BORE NO ILL FEELING TO THOSE DELEGATIONS WHO ABSTAINED SINCE HE WAS SURE THAT ONE DAY THEY WOULD RECOGNIZE THE RIGHTS OF THE PALESTINIANS.

8. IN OUR INFORMAL TALKS, WE FOUND THE ISRAELI OBSERVER QUITE DISAPPOINTED THAT NO WESTERN DEL (READ US) SPOKE PRIOR TO THE VOTE, BUT GRATEFUL FOR OUR SOLID "NO." HE HAD URGED THAT WE AT LEAST GIVE OUR EXPLANATION PRIOR TO THE VOTE, BUT WE JUDGED THIS NOT DESIRABLE IN PART BECAUSE IT COULD NOT HAVE AFFECTED ANY POSITION. THE EGYPTIANS TOOK OUR POSITION CALMLY, BUT THOUGH WE SHOULD HAVE MADE SOME CONCESSION IN LIGHT OF THE PLO'S ROLE IN THE LEBANON

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